

# Assembly California Legislature



## CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE RURAL CAUCUS

**To: Members of the California State Legislature Rural Caucus**  
**From: Assemblyman Dave Cogdill**  
**Date: March 10, 2003**  
**Re: Rural Health Care**

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I am excited to pass on the following information to you: The California Endowment, a nonprofit health foundation, announced a \$9 million grant to fund rural telemedicine projects at UC Davis and other sites around the state.

Telemedicine programs are a part of cutting edge technology that hold the promise of bringing vital health care services to a growing number of rural patients who might otherwise go untreated or wait months for care.

Since 3.8 million Californians now live in rural communities, access to health care services is a critical issue. The California Endowment believes that telemedicine can help bridge the gap between urban and rural communities and assist rural Californians in receiving the highest quality of health care services available.

Rural patients will be able to seek care from a wide variety of specialists from UC Davis through the use of phones, computers, video conferences, diagnostic cameras, and other electronic tools to diagnose patients in rural areas of California.

This endowment is especially important to rural districts. In 1998, California had 78 rural hospitals. Since then, nine have closed and 11 have filed for bankruptcy. Even more hospitals had to cut services to avoid closing their doors. Telemedicine also attempts to address physician shortages in rural areas. Urban areas have twice the number of specialists per capita than rural California counties and 50 percent more primary care physicians per capita.

The grant will be a step forward in improving rural healthcare and serving the patients in our districts.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Dassel in my Capitol office at 319-2025 or at [Jennifer.Dassel@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Dassel@asm.ca.gov) or visit The California Endowment at [www.calendow.ca.gov](http://www.calendow.ca.gov).